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TIPS on Personnel Management

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DEC 26 1963 for SUPERVISORS

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from the Director of Personnel

Carl B Barnes



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NOTE TO SUPERVISORS:

This really is not a "Tips to Supervisors."
It is a "Tips to Secretaries."

But since we don't have a regular issuance covering secretaries, will you pass this on to yours?

It was developed by the Secretaries' Forum of the Office of Personnel. This Forum consists of all the secretaries in the Office of Personnel. My secretary, Martha Preston, is chairman of the group. She wrote this with the help of the other girls.

Incidentally, I have asked our Secretaries' Forum to prepare a "Tips to Supervisors" on "A Secretary Speaks to Her Boss."

It will be issued soon.

Are you worried?

Carl B Barnes

Carl B. Barnes
Director of Personnel



Girl Friday

TO A SECRETARY:

The role of secretary is a very important one. On how well it is "played" could depend the success or failure of the boss - or the office.

The qualifications for a good secretary have long been the topic for much debate.

They have been thought about, talked about, written about, lectured about, analyzed, psychoanalyzed, evaluated, devaluated, satirized, idealized, and pulverized - to the point of saturation.

The qualifications for a secretary demanded by some bosses rival those for a successful Hollywood star.

Thanks to common sense, the majority of bosses are more practical and realistic. Within a certain framework of definite basic technical skills, the qualifications they require vary according to the importance of the job.

In government, the Civil Service Commission has set up certain standards for secretaries. A secretary is rated against them. Her status is determined on the basis of how her qualifications meet these standards. Being a government secretary, you are familiar with them, or should be. If not, ask your Personnel Officer about them.

In the meantime, we -OP's Secretaries' Forum-want to pass on to you some ideas concerning qualifications for a good secretary, some of which we've heard expressed by bosses and others at various meetings, some that have been told to us individually, and some we've heard other secretaries discussing among themselves. All of these, though not specifically itemized, are implicit in the CSC standards mentioned above.



We're going to ask you to think about them by posing them as questions. Maybe none of the questions we raise in what follows will be new to you - since you've already heard so much on the subject - but it is our hope you will turn them over in your own mind - give them some thought - and answer them to yourself - and maybe give yourself a score. You might find it worth your while.

Before getting into the topic of our discussion, we'd like to give you one interesting statistic from the Bureau of Labor Statistics:

As of January, 1962, 2,272,000 women in the U.S. were working as stenographers, typists and secretaries. We're sorry BLS didn't have a breakdown to show how many of these represent us - the secretaries. Just between "us girls," another BLS statistic

which might interest you is one that shows there are 80,000 MEN working in the stenotypist-secretary field!



Now, let's discuss the questions on a secretary's qualifications as we see them.

If you will indulge us, we'd like to do it this way. We're going to pretend that you - a secretary - have just walked into the room where the Secretaries' Forum is meeting. We have never seen you before and know nothing about you. We're going to let you in on our private thoughts - as we sit and talk with you - as to the questions which might arise in our minds about YOU:

The first thing that would strike us, we think, would be your appearance and your attitude as you walked through the door. These are the questions we might ask ourselves:

Appearance:

Is it, generally, good? Are you dressed in good taste? Or do you look as if you were on your way to a cocktail party- or night club? Or just the opposite - dowdy, run in stocking, and heels run down?

Starting with your "crowning glory" - is it "squeaky" clean and neatly arranged? Or too much pomp in your pompadour?

How's your make-up? Eyebrows raised in perpetual surprise? Too much eye shadow? Mascara too thick? Lipstick all smeared and too much Cupid's bow?

What about your nail-do? Like a Chinese Mandarin's?

Do you jingle-jangle-jingle when you move? With charm bracelets, dangly earrings, loops and loops of beads - too many rings on your fingers?

Do you fill the air about you with a strong aroma of heavy, exotic - and stifling perfume?

Are you just TOO glamorous? Glamour is fine - but keep it for the evenings.

Attitude:

Is your manner pleasant, courteous, friendly? Do you seem shy, timid, unsure of yourself? Are you smart-alecky and cocky - cold, disdainful and affected in manner? Do you impress us as a person with some maturity? Or are you a "delayed" adolescent - yet to "grow up"?



As "we girls" talk and exchange ideas, a very important factor begins to emerge - your personality. Those qualities begin to come out which the job classifiers call the "intangibles." If they're good ones they are your "icing on the cake." If bad, your passport to disaster. Those things - like the wind and the sun - they're there but you can't touch them or feel them physically - but they have a strong impact:



Personality:

Are you an "outgoing" person? Are you pleasant to be with? Do you have a pleasing voice - not one that grates?

Are you a person of integrity? Honest and straightforward? Have you a sense of responsibility - dependable - reliable - do you keep your word?

Reasonably discreet? Sincere? Are you diplomatic? Exercise tact at all times? Are you kind and understanding? Considerate of others? What about humility? A little is an engaging quality.

Are you even-tempered - not the kind to "fly off the handle"? Are you objective, unbiased and impersonal? Do you become emotional in debate - let your emotions influence your attitude?

Would you be the type to play office politics? Deliberately sabotage someone's project? Vindictive - hold grudges - want to "get even" - spiteful? Do you show initiative? Or are you a "day dreamer"?

DO YOU HAVE A SENSE OF HUMOR???



After "taking you in" -so to speak- we felt the next things we would consider would be "How would you be on the Job?" Here they are:

Job Demands:

What do you know about the function of your office? And your own personal function in relation to it? Do you feel that what the office does is important? Do you have an interest in your work? Would you be "right" - are you qualified for the job? Do you get the job done? Can you stand the gaff?

Are you resourceful? Using all your talents? If not, why not? Are you foresighted? Prompt? Good memory? Can you compose a good letter for the boss in his style? Are you a good co-worker? Can you give and take?

Would you "pull rank" on other workers? Would you use the iceberg technique or cold shoulder ANYONE? Do you volunteer to help out in emergencies? Do you say "please" often enough; "thank you"; "may I help?"

Are your telephone manners a credit to the office? Do you keep the "rush" from creeping into your voice over the phone? Would

you say you are just as courteous on the phone and helpful as you try to be in person? Do you say "Who's calling?" instead of saying "May I tell him who's calling?"



Would you be a good "traffic officer"? Keep the mail moving and avoid bottlenecks? How do you "take to" the "housekeeping" tasks? Would you consider filing beneath you? Do you keep the files up to date and neat in order?



Do you keep the boss' pens filled, his pencils nicely sharpened? Keep him well supplied with notepads, etc.?

Do your technical skills reflect good basic training?

Do you know how to take dictation and transcribe your notes correctly? How's your spelling? Grammar? Punctuation? Are you a speedy typist? And accurate? Does your work have "eye" appeal? Do you "proof" your work carefully?

Being a government secretary, we would assume you would make use of the nice neat package - compact and handy - done up for our special convenience - the "U.S. Government Correspondence Manual." The use of this is a "must" for a government secretary.



We would also assume you would make good use of other working tools such as the "GPO Style Manual" and a good dictionary.



And last - but not least - we wonder how your relationship would work out with that

VERY IMPORTANT PERSON

The Boss:

Have you learned to know your boss? Have you learned to know his strength and weaknesses? What motivates the boss?

Have you learned the boss' pace - his tempo of operation - and adapted yourself accordingly? What is your attitude toward the boss? Do you take pride in his accomplishments? Are you projecting the "image" of the boss - or the office - he wishes to project?

Do you treat the boss with respect? Do you "talk back" to the boss? Are you loyal to the boss? Do you keep the boss' confidence? Have you tried to anticipate the boss' needs



and tried to fulfill them? Do you run his interference - serve as his block - and aid in the tackle - and help him over the goal line? Try to save his time? Look after details? Do you let the boss "blow his top" once in a while? And forgive him later?



All of these questions run through our minds as we sit and talk with you. We ask ourselves what would be your answers to these questions if we were to put them to you.

As our imaginary "interview" turns towards its ending, our thoughts turn in a new direction. Questions arise in our minds concerning your "extracurricular" activities - your outside interests. What are you doing after working hours which would help you to continue your growth and development?

Are you taking any evening courses that could make you more efficient on the job or prepare you for advancement?

Do you have some recreation? Some hobbies that would help you develop and "round out" your personality?



We are finished now - you leave us - and we wonder:

WHAT ARE THE ANSWERS??? HOW DO YOU SCORE??

DO THEY MAKE YOU LOOK - AND FEEL - LIKE THIS?



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